

# The Bulletin

of the

## Hartford Seminary Foundation

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NUMBER 24

JUNE 1958

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## Preface

This issue of the Bulletin brings together materials presented at the Foundation on various occasions. The three papers on the Holy Spirit were among those read at an Eastern Regional Meeting of the Inter-seminary Movement in February, 1956. Mr. Sweet's paper on *Modern Public Relations and the Church* was given at the Church Public Relations Institute in March of this year. The tributes to President Stafford and Professor Spinka were given at a Faculty Dinner held in honor of the Staffords and Spinkas in April. Special thanks are due The Reverend Richard C. Andrews, H.T.S., 1957, who edited the papers on The Holy Spirit.

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# The Theology of the Holy Spirit

BY WILLIAM L. BRADLEY

There are so many obvious difficulties in speaking of an apparently nebulous concept like the Holy Spirit that we shy away from it in favor of the more objective, concrete aspects of the Christian faith. Yet today there is a growing awareness that theology must deal with the whole of our faith, rather than with this or that portion of it in isolation, and there is an increasing sense of need for a re-examination of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

I have personal difficulty in dealing with this subject because of the fact that my capacities as a teacher are devoted to the philosophical rather than the dogmatic aspects of theology, and this means that much that I shall have to say will bear the marks of contemporary philosophy, perhaps at the expense of doctrinal theology. It is inevitable, however, when one comes to a theological treatment of a subject, that one's own convictions—one's own involvement—should be apparent. Just what my own bias may be will become obvious as we proceed.

In this discussion I propose to divide the topic into three sections: (I) the problems involved in our approach to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; (II) the manner in which I believe we must examine the work of the Holy Spirit; (III) the way in which the Holy Spirit works in the salvation of the world.

## I

### THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN OUR APPROACH TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our troubles in approaching the doctrine of the Holy Spirit can be fairly safely subsumed under the phrase, "the subject-object dichotomy." That is to say, we seem ever in danger of making the Holy Spirit an object, in which case subjective experience is depreciated, or, on the other hand, of making the Holy Spirit purely subjective—experiential and individualistic—in which case our faith falls under the dominance of psychologism. How can we avoid the one difficulty without falling prey to the other? Before we attempt an answer to this, let us see what is involved in the problem.

In an age of technics it is natural that we should be tempted to put every concept into concrete, objective, and if possible perceptual



or tactual form. How can we escape such a temptation in a culture which has proved so successful in its development of the applied sciences? And thus we should be happy could we but make of the Holy Spirit a substance, or energy, or vector which might someday, when our instruments are perfected, come under the purview of an experimental science.

But the Holy Spirit is not to be conceived as an object. He is not a substance, not a form of energy or force. He is beyond the possibility of measurement by an electro-cardiograph machine, impossible to chart on a brain-wave graph. The Holy Spirit will not make a "blip" on a radarscope, and is not going to interfere with our television reception this year, though sunspots will. The Holy Spirit is not merely too small to be discovered by an electron microscope, but is of a nature never to be subject to investigation in that way. For the Holy Spirit is neither an object which cannot be discovered in the macrocosm merely because His limits are too vast ever to be compressed into the range of a telescope, nor too tiny to be located in the microcosm only because His mass is below that of the fundamental particles of matter: *the Holy Spirit is not an object at all.*

We must just simply say that the Holy Spirit is not, and never can be, a thing, an object. We are not dealing here with a different kind of substance, a metaphysical being who exists apart from the world but touches it in certain ways and in certain times and places—at least, as I interpret it this is not to comprehend the nature of the problem. Here we are dealing with that which is without extension or limits, which does not exist in the sense that any natural object we might name exists, and yet which is present to us in such a manner that we can deny the reality of the Holy Spirit only by denying our own reality as well.

If we cannot speak of the Holy Spirit as an object, are we justified in speaking of Him as a subject? Certainly not in terms of a Thou, as we commonly use that term, can the Spirit be identified. Whereas we find no better way to address God than as the Holy Father—as subject—and Jesus Christ as the Son of God, we feel at once that this manner of discourse is profoundly unfitting in respect to the Holy Spirit. For though we pray to God the Father, and to Jesus Christ as well, we do not—we feel we cannot—pray similarly to the Holy Spirit. Thus the Holy Spirit is said to proceed from the Father and from the Son, and to be different in some essential way from either of them. God speaks to His people through the Spirit, He communicates to our spirits through His Spirit, our spirits have

their reality because of the reality of the Holy Spirit, perhaps, but no more is the Holy Spirit a subject than an object.

This is because subject, like object, is concrete, limited, substantial in some way or another. And the Spirit is none of these. He is object to our thought, He is subject of our propositions, but He is neither subject nor object except in these symbolic ways of expression. This even means that when we denote the masculine gender to the personal pronoun we do so symbolically rather than literally, for how can we call that which is neither subject nor object by any gender and mean it literally?

Our first problem, then, is that we cannot speak of the Holy Spirit—save in symbolical terms—as an object or a subject. How then can we speak of Him at all? How can we find Him in our objective world, how can we know His presence in our midst?

It would seem that if the Holy Spirit is neither subject nor object it must be possible—nay even necessary—to look to personal, subjective experience to discover Him. That this is partly true I shall not deny, but that it is the entire truth is something I should question strenuously.

The nature of personal experience is that it is subjective. Because it is personal it is unique, particular, and not subject to objectification. Thus a religious experience, so important and decisive for one who is grasped by it, is by its very nature subject to distortion and misrepresentation. Furthermore, we often find that two people or groups with contradictory opinions will often cite the Holy Spirit as authority for their views, though we fail to see how both could be right, although both could be wrong.

The tendency to subjectivize experience of the Holy Spirit is to reduce the Spirit from the subject-object dichotomy to nebulous spirituality. It is to follow the Cartesian distinction between mind and matter to the point of identifying Spirit with mind, and world with matter, and to make so drastic a split between the two that there can be no necessary connection between the Spirit and the world. Losing His concreteness, the Holy Spirit is reduced to a vague, disembodied quality which is everywhere and nowhere, never objectified, never localized, never related to creation or to historical process in any way. The Holy Spirit in such a case is identified with an individualistic, subjectivistic, non-historical type of religious experience in which the world of human affairs—the locus of the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ—is at best irrelevant, and at the worst the seat of all evil.



## II

### A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE CONCEPT

We are left with this dilemma: the Holy Spirit cannot be object or subject, nor can we be satisfied to rule Him out of the world of subject-object relationships. How then can we speak intelligently of the Holy Spirit?

The answer, I believe, is to be found in the term, 'relationship.' That is to say, we must look to relationships between God and man and between man and man if we are to find the Holy Spirit. It is held by Quick, Dillistone, and those upon whom these writers have relied for their authority, that in the Old Testament the word, 'Spirit,' is intended to refer to the activity of God. Similarly in the New Testament we find the Holy Spirit specified in connection with an event which is taking place. That which takes place may be referred to as an encounter between God and man or between men inspired by God, and we seek the Holy Spirit in this encounter. Where nothing happens we shall not expect to find the Spirit present, not because He may not be present, but because there is no way in which we could discover Him to be there.

This means that we must necessarily look to structural relationships to discover the work of the Holy Spirit, and when I use the word, 'work,' I am introducing the term which I prefer to employ when studying the doctrine.

Immediately the question arises, "How can that which is neither subject nor object have any meaning in respect to structures?" But the question is simply answered by illustrations taken from many phases of our normal experience. Take a family, for example: the members of the family are all subjects, but the family as a unit is not. It has no personality in the sense that each member of the unit has, yet it has reality as a structure which can be analyzed, dissected, destroyed, reoriented, subtracted from or added to. Likewise an audience such as this one: you and I are related to one another in no organic, objective way, and yet between us are all kinds of dynamic relationships—of appeal from me to you as I seek to impart my thoughts to you, of assent or dissent on your part as I speak, of tensions between us because of the differences in our backgrounds and presuppositions, of misunderstandings latent within the group as we go from the address to a discussion period and begin to break down what has been said into units for analysis and debate. Recently I attended a laymen's meeting at which the choir of the host church

sang two anthems for the group. I was mildly interested as the choir marched into the room: a number of individuals, each with his own mannerisms, appearance, and dress, were arrayed before us and we prepared to hear these individuals perform for us. The director stood before the choir, a chord was sounded on the piano, and at a sign the group of individuals became a cohesive, unitary structure, responding precisely to the leadership of the director as they wrung from that music a beautiful anthem—not solitary notes which followed one upon the other to make a cumulative effect of great beauty, but a single piece of music which was more than the collection of those notes and more than a number of singers performing them. Music and musicians had become one in a structure which was real and remains real in my memory today.

It is in this way that I envisage the Holy Spirit. He is to be found, not in isolation, not in separation from the world of space and time, but—if we may use the word—*incarnate* in structures which are spatio-temporal in the world of creation, in a word, historical. This is not to say that without history there can be no Holy Spirit, for that would be to deny the eternity and infinity of the Godhead. But it is to say that we know of the Holy Spirit of God only in and through historical experience of a structural, organic sort. He is to be found where there are relationships: relationships between God and man, as at Pentecost or the conversion of Paul or the experience of Wesley at Aldersgate; relationships between man and man, as within the Church when old prejudices are overcome and the Church is renewed—witness the Church of South India as a prime example of this.

We must look to human institutions and experiences and events, then, to find the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit, in the words of Barth, is God's revealedness. The implication of this standpoint may be apparent to you by now: for what it means is simply that, in my opinion, a doctrine of the Holy Spirit necessarily entails an explication of the work of God in man's salvation. Thus we speak not of the Holy Spirit in isolation or abstraction, save as we are perfectly aware of what we are doing, but rather we speak of the Holy Spirit *and* the Church, the Holy Spirit *and* the Bible, the Holy Spirit *and* the individual, the Holy Spirit *and* history, the Holy Spirit *and* the Word. And when we speak of the Church, the Bible, the individual in his cultural setting, and the like, we should, as believers, be thinking of these in terms of that alone which gives them life in God—the Holy Spirit.



Let me summarize what we have said thus far. We began by criticizing all attempts to think of the Holy Spirit in terms of the subject-object dichotomy. Thus we stated that it is a mistake to think of the Holy Spirit either as an object or a subject, for He is neither the one nor the other.

This led to a criticism of the second danger which lies before one who is concerned with this doctrine: the danger of developing a system which makes of the Spirit something vague, nebulous, and disembodied, something which has no necessary relationship to any object or subject, something which is mere quality and nothing more. We indicated that the difficulties to be encountered here are of two sorts: first, that the result is an individualistic and relativistic subjectivism; and second, that the relationship between God and man ceases to be historically relevant insofar as the Holy Spirit is concerned.

We suggested, therefore, that a reconsideration of the doctrine in such terms that we should not fall into the one danger of making the Spirit a quantitative or substantial thing, or the other danger of keeping Him in isolation from the world of factual experience. The method we proposed was simply to think of the Holy Spirit in terms of structural relationships, which themselves are objective although that which binds them together is not.

In the third section of the paper let us see how this can be developed in terms of the work of the Holy Spirit in man's salvation.

### III

#### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN MAN'S SALVATION

Although I shall not document the section which follows, I am indebted most particularly to the English Puritans and to P. T. Forsyth for the ideas.<sup>1</sup> The Puritans supply us with much help at this point because it was during this period that the authority of Scripture and the Holy Spirit supplanted in large sections of Christendom the authority of the Church.

We are eager today to identify ourselves with the statement that Christianity is a religion historical in nature, that it proclaims that God is the God of history, and that the historicity of Jesus Christ is a central teaching of the faith. But what do we mean by all this? What does it mean to have a historical religion whose message is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Thos. Goodwin: *The Work of the Holy Ghost in our Salvation*; John Owen: *The Holy Spirit*; P. T. Forsyth: *Faith, Freedom, and the Future*, and *The Principle of Authority*; also Geoffrey Nuttall: *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*.



about history and God's redemption of man in the historical continuum?

Too often what this means is that Jesus Christ lived and died in a period of time to which we can give a date, and that because Jesus Christ is Lord, therefore history must come under His dominion. This may be—and I should assert, must be—true enough, but what significance does it have for a man in the Twentieth Century? Its importance, I should say, depends upon whether Christianity can assert not only that Jesus Christ was an historical figure, but that ever since His death God has been involved in, and I should almost want to use the word, 'incarnate,' in man's history. In other words, there has to be some relationship between the God of 30 A.D., Who in the Incarnation gave universal significance to that epoch, and the living God of this century. There must be some way of expressing the historical presence of the Eternal God ever since the founding of the Christian Church. For we can see that what needed to be redeemed was not merely Peter and his generation of Jews and Gentiles, but sinful man, who continues to sin long after Peter has passed from the scene.

We do not doubt that Peter and those first Christians were redeemed through the grace of God and their freely given response in faith. But more than their redemption is involved in the Gospel of Jesus Christ: it was the world which was at stake, not merely certain individuals in it, a world which went on and on long after it was expected to be brought to a cataclysmic end. Therefore, to make the Gospel a relevant, contemporary message for all men in every time and place, it is necessary not only to have a contemporary Christ but also a God who is present to us every moment of our lives. God present and with us now is the Holy Spirit. History requires the extension of the Incarnation as ever new situations arise and ever new individuals are confronted with decisions.

We have said earlier, however, that it is of little value to speak of a disembodied Spirit in a world of historical process. And therefore we must look to structural forms by which the Holy Spirit may be present unto us. There are two such forms which are basic to our faith, the Church and the Bible. How can the Holy Spirit be tied to an institution like the Church—or to any institution, for that matter; and how can a set of manuscripts written by fallible human beings be said to have been inspired by the Holy Spirit?

Let us admit that the Church is a fallible institution like all institutions. It makes mistakes, it sins against God and men, it falters

and fails in its evangelical task. But to say this is not to say what needs to be said about the Church, for it is holy in spite of its fallibility. It has an amazing record of renewal and self-criticism which has kept it vital and alive through the rise and fall of many a civilization. Just when it solidifies it is shaken up by a new spirit within it which revitalizes it and starts it on another course. It dies or is destroyed in some areas only to take on new life somewhere else. It becomes divided through denominational differences in the West and restores a good part of its unity in the East.

As we look at the history of this institution we observe remarkable powers of renewal, and we say that here the Holy Spirit is at work. A doctrine of the Holy Spirit must include the doctrine of the Church.

Not only does the Church show this renewal within itself, but it shows, despite its compromises and failures in so-called secular cultures, the power of redemption in society. No longer do we in the Western world amuse ourselves by watching gladiators fighting to the death; we are not without atavistic tendencies, and yet we do not promote sporting events in which slaves are thrown to the lions. Slavery is morally reprehensible, tyranny is not just taken for granted. Illness is considered to be remediable, literacy is within the possibility of the rank and file no matter what their creed or color. We say that the Church is working, through the Holy Spirit, to redeem men and societies in every age—and if we have any humility we realize that it is the power outside ourselves rather than that within us as human beings which performs the miracles.

The Bible is also a structural form through which we find the Holy Spirit at work in the world. The Bible illuminates the Church and its members, but it was the Church which set the canon of the Bible. These two, Church and Bible, are in a reciprocal relationship which is broken artificially by us when we over-emphasize one or the other. They belong together. See how the Bible over and over again brings men to their knees as they read it. Yet the words they read now, by which their hearts are set on fire, may be the same words they had read countless times before without effect. How do we account for it? We say that the Bible is the Word of God, but only to those who see it through the eyes of faith. And the eyes of faith are eyes which have been touched by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is found at work in illuminating the pages of the Holy Word.

Now in both the case of the Church and the Bible, two formal, institutionalized, concrete structures are efficacious for the redemp-

tion of men in every particular place and time. Yet these structures are in themselves not holy, nor are they endowed with miraculous power save as they are the occasion by which men come to an awareness of the meaning of Christ in their lives and their society because the Holy Spirit is operating in and through the Church and Bible to do the will of God.

Does the Holy Spirit operate in and through social and collective organisms, then, rather than through individuals? It might seem that this is my opinion, but in reality it is not, for I believe that men come into the Kingdom of God one by one through personal decision on their own part.

Nevertheless, no man lives to himself, of himself, or by himself; and it is a fact that the faith of any one of us is the faith of all Christians throughout the ages. Though there be millions of Christians there is still one faith, one Lord, one baptism. That means that although the work of the Holy Spirit may be said truly to be personal, it is never individualistic. Into a social community with living traditions is born a child. As he matures he comes to religious decisions which by and large will be typical of his environment, although he may think that his decision is unique in its form and his alone. He becomes a confessing Christian within the context of his culture, because he cannot escape that context even though he denies it. He must always react to it in one way or another, just as it reacts to him.

For this reason we are justified in holding that salvation is into and within the Church. This is not to make the Church the instrument of salvation, nor to set it up as a holy institution simply because it is the Church. But it is to say that the salvation of one soul is related to the salvation of others, and that the community of the saved is the Christian Church. It is for this reason that we are wary of individuals who believe themselves to have been saved but have nothing to do with their fellow men. We are rightly suspicious of people who set up their own "true" churches or denominations, and we are hesitant about those who can find the only pure worship of God in isolation from the earthly institution established by the Apostles.

By this we do not intend to disparage groups which are motivated by pietism or mysticism but continue as brotherhoods of like-minded worshippers. The manner in which men worship is secondary to the links which bind them to one another. What we are cautioning against is any individual who believes that the Holy Spirit cannot and will not work through the institutional Church because it is



evil; who maintains, in short, that Christianity consists of a private relationship between an individual and God. Solitude is one thing—and essential—but solitariness is another.

How then does the Holy Spirit work in the salvation of mankind? I should recommend the following formula: *The Holy Spirit works in the historical process according to a social pattern which must be appropriated by each person for himself.* Thus the process itself, as a living institution, is redemptive, but the demands of the Gospel are such that each individual must pledge his allegiance or swear his loyalty oath to the redemptive work of God if he is to be associated in the end with its culmination in the Kingdom of God.

The general pattern is as follows: (1) illumination, (2) conviction, (3) justification and sanctification, (4) regeneration.

The first stage in this redemptive pattern is illumination. It is through the work of the Holy Spirit that new light is shed upon old truths. It can be argued that knowledge itself is possible only through the operation of this power outside ourselves, but some would limit the work of the Holy Spirit to "saving knowledge." Certainly this is the most significant for our discussion. How happens it that this man who saw nothing in Scripture now finds in it a guide for his life? How account for the experience of an Augustine, a Luther, or a Wesley? When we say that the Holy Spirit illuminates our hearts, we are giving a reason for an experience which cries out for an explanation. To one without this experience the words, "Holy Spirit," are but abstract words which form a concept; for one whose experience has been of this sort, "Holy Spirit" means, "God opened my eyes for me in this way!"

In the higher sort of illumination which is associated with saving knowledge, notice that the content is fixed and formalized in the Scripture, but it comes to life in the experience of the believer in a mysterious way. The Holy Spirit is known, not in isolation from concrete objects in experience, but in and through them as He breathes life into them.

The second stage in the pattern of redemption is conviction: conviction of sin as one becomes aware of himself in relation to a Holy God and the neighbor in need. Such insight into one's shortcomings is attendant upon revelation from outside oneself, and is the second step rather than the first. The grace of God is logically prior to the faith of a man—if the two can ever be separated in this artificial manner. It is only as we become aware of the depths of God's love in the crucifixion of His only-begotten Son that are led to

make that agonizing reappraisal of ourselves attendant upon our conviction of sin. That is, it is not God Who convicts us, but we ourselves, in His light which reveals the deepest shadows in our hearts.

Thus we are led by the Holy Spirit to throw ourselves upon the mercy of God, knowing at last how little we deserve the love which He has manifested. Once again, note that the Holy Spirit operates in the historical, everyday context: we are the content or material of the revelation. It is not the holiness of God of which we become aware in this situation, but the holiness of God and the sinfulness of ourselves as we really are, here and now. And we discover, not that we are sinful in general, but sinful in particular, mean, vicious, subhuman ways that have left their marks upon ourselves and all with whom we have been associated.

The third stage in the pattern of redemption is a twofold one of justification and sanctification. Responding to the love of God, one knows himself to have become cleansed of his sin, and to have become acceptable in the eyes of God. Now communion with God is possible as it had not been heretofore, since previously man was cut off from God by unholiness.

The response to God's mercy is faith, and justification is held to come about through the reciprocal relationship between grace and faith. The possibility of faith depends upon the act of God by which men are sanctified or set apart to begin a new life which will result in a new creature at the end of the process.

We see the experience of a man who is lost in his world, perhaps through alcoholism, indecision, or pride. He is cut off from effective action no matter how hard he tries to make the grade. Then something happens to him and he is a new man. He is no longer cut off from God, despite the continuing effects of his sin upon himself and society: how do we know he is not? Ask him, and he will tell you. Argue with him as you like, he knows this to be so and he can live by that knowledge. He turns away from the old ways and the old self toward a new way and a self which is grounded in God, and slowly, painfully, haltingly there begins to develop within him a more holy nature than he had known before.

Here is a man—and his name is legion, is it not—who has found in this life the power to face himself and his world in their broken state, and then comes to grips with reality right where he is. The Holy Spirit is found by him to be working, not outside this miserable situation, but in it, with him and through him to justify and sanctify him and the social order of which he is a part.

Thomas Goodwin teaches that the new creature which we are to become does not exist in its fullness here and now, but that the Holy Spirit is with us in our transition from the old nature to the new. By this he means that it is only in the Kingdom that we shall be made new, but that the guarantee is ours through the Spirit during our earthly pilgrimage. The final pattern is that of holiness, the completion of the new man, and this is not to be experienced here on earth but is held in faith. Yet we can see that if there is to be a new man it can come only through the power of God, not through the power which we as humans have within us. As we did not create ourselves, so we do not recreate ourselves. Our souls rest in Him and His purposes for us and for all mankind.

It is in the nature of the Gospel to proclaim an amazing message which we hesitate to say for ourselves lest it be pure arrogance: that God loves us sufficiently to sacrifice His Son for our salvation. That we should believe this about our worth to God and yet see ourselves as we really are is the work of the Holy Spirit, speaking to us and through us to others.

## CONCLUSION

We have stated in this paper that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit requires an approach other than the subject-object approach typical of modern philosophy and theology since Descartes. We have attempted to show how it is wrong to think of the Holy Spirit as object or subject, and yet that we cannot speak of the Holy Spirit as non-historical and disembodied and still be true to the historical revelation of Christ Incarnate.

No doubt the elaboration, as well as the presupposition, has been more wrong than right; but if it has opened the way to you to re-examine the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in terms of historical, spatio-temporal structures, then it may have been useful for the purposes of discussion.

Such an effort as this is personally exhausting because the mystery we seek to grasp is too great for human comprehension. Yet we have the Church, the Bible, and the experience of Christians throughout the centuries to show us the way and to lead us to pray for our own times, "Open us to Thy Spirit, Lord."



# The Holy Spirit Outside the Church

BY JOHN DILLENBERGER

When the printed announcement of this program was posted on our bulletin board, some of my colleagues quipped—"a strange topic considering Harvard has been outside the churches so long; we thought you were one of those responsible for a new tradition." Their words troubled me the more because I had not chosen the subject. But as I began to reflect on the topic it very soon became evident that I was being led to rather than away from the church. I do not know whether or not this was supposed to happen in the eyes of your steering committee. It means, of course, that finally the problem of the Holy Spirit outside the church is one of definition in the light of the church. In fact, a total orientation to the world outside the church is here involved. One could put it this way: On the part of Christians, there is no adequate reflection about the nature of what goes on outside the church, unless grounded in looking at the world from within the church.

The abandonment of this rigorous angle of vision obscures so many theological problems. Take for instance the concept of predestination—it becomes a problem only when it is thought to be a theory about the destiny of people in isolation from a vision of a community of believers who see in it something meaningful about their own faith. Apart from that context, it becomes sheer speculation unrelated to the life of the church. Similar distortion results if we are not clear about the Spirit. It must be seen, so to speak, in the light of its locale, namely, the church. But this must never be understood in the condescending sense of the superiority of the church. We are speaking rather of the necessary angle of vision from the vantage point of those who understand the totality of their life in the light of the church. Although Professor Bradley in his address on the "Theology of the Spirit" undoubtedly spoke of the spirit in the church, let me go back for a moment to say something about the Spirit as the foundation for the Spirit outside the church. It is the Spirit which creates the possibility of the acceptance of the word and confirms it to the believer. In this respect, the Biblical dimensions and the church's understanding are inevitably trinitarian. The trinitarian claim does not mean that we need necessarily believe in a particular formulation of the trinity, but that we see what is involved in a conception of a triune God. The trinity as a theological concept does not occur as we know in the New Testament, but the framework or the theological materials for a concept of the trinity seem to me to be neces-

sarily implied in an understanding of the New Testament. It is truly the activity and operation of God in His triune character which is the basis of the church's life. The Word so to speak is the objective content. The Spirit so to speak is the confirmation of the content. At the same time the one God is at once Word and Spirit, and His disclosure of Himself is that of an order of distinctions in identity. We speak, therefore, of the activity of God Who is creator, redeemer, and known as such in the light of the operation of Him who is creator and redeemer, namely the Spirit. Our concern, therefore, is not with the spirit in general; we speak as the title says of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is nothing else but a manifestation of the creative confirmation and power of God, Himself.

Speaking of the Spirit outside the church demands that some attention be given to the meaning of the church. At least some problems in connection with the concept of the church find partial solution if we resort to definitions. If the church is defined as a visible institution, we have one conception. If the church is identified with those who are finally God's elect, we have another conception. And if the elect are somehow related to the visible church, we have a third, or a mixture of the two. It is not my task here to speak about what conception of the church we ought to have, or how the various facets and the definitions are related to each other. For the problem of the Spirit outside the church, we can say that we are here dealing with the activity of God which does not ordinarily find manifestation through what we call the visible church. Nor shall we speculate on whether any manifestation apart from the visible belongs either to the latent or the invisible church.

The theological background for the Spirit outside the church lies, it seems to me, in the conception of a fallen world. Here, too, one could speculate whether if there were not a fallen world all life would be worship, and in this sense all life would be life in the church. But one could also raise the question that if we were not in a fallen world, would all life really be life in the church, or would not the church be superfluous? This is the so-called theoretical irrelevant academic question, the answer to which depends upon the definition of the nature of the church. Since the end product in any case would be the same, we do not need to quibble about the point, nor do we need to quibble over the question whether such a situation would be all work or all worship. When some people want to work all the time, it is time they worship, and when some people say that worship is everything, it's time for them to work. In respect to this life, the church by its nature

demands work and worship at one and the same time. Here, it is defined by analogy in respect to fallen world.

Our domain is in every respect that of a fallen world, but one which mirrors something still of Him who made it. But this is said in the context of faith and therefore is a statement about the operation of God made from within the confessional matrix. Therefore, it is not a type of natural theology. Natural theology even in Brunner's sense seems to me to be speculation about an aspect of the world's reality apart from the concept of faith through which it is seen. Recently I have been re-reading Calvin's "Institutes", and it seems to me that a lot of traditional problems could be solved if one frankly recognized that Calvin never cared to say anything about God apart from the context of faith. He reads everything back from faith, and therefore, never really speaks of what we know in general. It is Christians who see even in a fallen world, God reflected and refracted. Others may in some sense see it too. Although more will be said later, here it is sufficient to note that they do not argue for it in a sense of natural theology. What I am trying to suggest in terms of this refraction is, taking a note from Augustine, that in the fallen created order the marks of God are evident to the eyes of faith, though themselves sharing the split of reality and of life. Augustine, you recall, in the light of faith could see something of the trinity everywhere. He even could divide all philosophy into three. That he saw this from the standpoint of faith is clear in that in different places the three-fold division of philosophy differs. He is not consistent, and violence is done in order to make it come out right. Better that Augustine did it that way, than to have misled us through an unambiguous precision. One can say that the split is not even as neat as Augustine made it. But he saw that the unity of man's relation to his maker did not exist. It is not of course that there are three parts, so to speak, which are good and which taken together would restore us. But there is more than the distortion of all levels of reality. Part of the distortion is the fragmentation of reality. This distortion and fragmentation is however positive because it is still God's creation with which we are concerned. It is God's fallen world which mirrors distortedly, brokenly and in a split way something of himself.

In this sense, the Spirit is not confined to the church. The creative power of God works in an entire creation in which, if there were no fall, creation itself would sing the praises of God so unambiguously that in a sense we would stand in the presence of that reality to which the church bears witness. Under the Fall, it sings it at least brokenly to



those who know the Spirit. This is a way of saying that God's relation to a world is never eradicated for those who understand it from the standpoint of faith. One is struck by how Calvin's concept of Providence is worked out in this respect. God's continuing relation to creation even in a fallen world is such that he is operative at every point at every moment. Our conception of orders and structures makes Calvin's way of stating it impossible; and yet Calvin is acutely aware that God must be working in and through everything in the world, if it is his creation. In a very real way, Calvin already spoke against a subsequent development in Protestantism. Most Protestants are deists on one level of their existence. They accept a world which God has made, or a world which God will redeem, a world in which God is somehow operative. But there is no genuine feeling that God is directly present and working in the processes, the structures, and vitalities of life. There is no escape from a concept of continuous creation taking place in the midst of a fallen creation. But this needs careful definition. Continuous creation here does not mean that God has made a world which He has never finished, and upon which He is now putting the last touches. Nor is it a matter of connecting this concept with that of evolution. The concept of the continuous creation or creativity of God has to do with the ever present relation of God to nature and to life in such a way that the world is understood to be held and sustained by Him. A continuous creation is, therefore, not to be confused either with an unfinished creation or an almost completed creation. It is not that something is lacking which will be completed. It is rather, that there is no way of thinking of a creation which is independent of its maker. The deist nerve has to be cut once and for all. The truth of all pantheism is that it understands the danger of every deist conception, though it destroys the concept of creation from another angle. A god who is continually involved in creation is a God who himself works in and through and sustains and holds the world in being. Within Protestant thinking we have to recapture God's ever present relation to the world and therefore the positive thrust toward the world. Such an approach does not ignore sin; it states that the world as such cannot be rejected, and that it is not an obstacle to be overcome. It is, to be sure, that which is to be transformed.

The split within God's creation does not mean His absence from the world, but His potential, knowable presence through a broken and distorted unity. That is why when we speak of the Spirit outside the church we really speak of God's activity as knowable here, too, though from the faith born from within the church. We do not point and

say, "Here is the fullness of God manifest outside the church." In the same way, we ought not point and say, "Here is the fullness of God inside the church." Inside and outside are both under the judgment of the one who is the triune God; inside and outside are related in order from the first to the second, but they are neither completely nor finally separated.

A broad enough conception of creation includes the spirit of God ruling over the chaos, transforming it into meaningful order. Just as one cannot eliminate the background of chaos in a concept of creation projected into the past, so in God's continual relation to the world, chaos is not eliminated. Frequently those outside the church have a more adequate comprehension of the chaos and disorder in the midst of which and through which God moves. Chaos belongs to life and given our situation is the bedrock for creation and creativity. Nietzsche more than his contemporary Christians understood this when he said that unless one had some chaos in one's soul, one could not create a shining star. Now, all chaos is death. But in a fallen world all order is death, too. The problem of a fallen world is that creativity and order are not wedded together in harmony, that so to speak, the Logos of God and the creativity activity of God are split. Structure and chaos, the rudiments of creativity, are pulled apart, and hence the alternatives of the spirit of destruction, or the chaos which is formed into creative order.

God broods over the chaos. If God forms the chaos, if chaos is that out of which life emerges, then indeed one cannot say that God is absent from it. There is a lesson in this, for we are all tempted to prefer order. Order looks so much better because it is so much safer. The Spirit, related as it is in this life to chaos, always causes trouble. He causes trouble inside and outside the churches. He causes trouble inside the churches in respect to revivalists, pentecostal groups, etc. This is not to say that chaos is to be preferred. But it is to say that the split in God's creation manifests itself too in the revivals in which the glory of God's presence is driven into a wildness unrelated to His order. It is something of God which is driven and distorted, for it is the creative power of God unrelated to the order of God. Where there is only the order of God, distorted, broken, but order without Spirit, there is death outside and death inside. This death, inside or outside, comes to those who have made the order of God into a principle of safety. The problem of a fallen world is exactly that either all order or all spirit is dangerous. All spirit is the vitality which kills us by destroying us through its chaos, and all order is the stranglehold

which kills us by taking life away. The burden of life is that of having to struggle with vitality and order. This involves risks which those inside and outside the churches have difficulty in taking. The risk of life is the risk and inevitability of being a sinner, and most people do not want to be that. It is amazing how the church finds it impossible to accept that it is the community of continually redeemed sinners. It is the one place where one could expect people to admit it. It is the hardest place in the world to admit it—not verbally because on this level in the church everybody will admit it sooner or later—but actually in the depths. There is an acceptance of life under God which includes sin, or there is the lessening of life in the vitalities which destroy or in the rigid order which takes life away. Those are the alternatives. The willingness or the risk to be a sinner is a reflection of the broken character of God's world. Those who are too squeamish will not even reflect anything but their own death. The dead bury the dead and it is better to be hot or cold. Where men are hot or cold, something is going on; there is life, vitality; God may be at work, wrestling if nothing else with the devil. The one thing that we know about the devil is that he is not the symbol of death in this life. Sometimes he is more the symbol of life than are Christians themselves.

The Christian movement must recapture the venturesomeness of risk, of not being safe. Spirit is the activity of God at work outside the church in its creative way, driving toward destruction or toward fulfillment. This goes on in God's world and Christians ought not ever to be surprised at whatever happens. They should be the last to be surprised at the agonies of life but know that it belongs. There is a striving of God which men cannot help but reflect without and within.

The Spirit of God understood in this broken way, i.e., short of the consummation of the world, is also known as the Spirit of truth. It is the Spirit of truth which moves, is operative, and confessed to be present where truth is affirmed. All of us know people and movements which exhibit integrity, the integrity of something of the truth. Such truth is also God's truth. God who Himself is Truth can be said to be working and struggling for truth wherever it expresses itself. But it is the spirituality of this truth which is important. Wherever men are engaged in vulgar arguing about the truth, inside or outside the churches, God may be least at work. In a fallen world there is an inevitable battle concerning truth. But the fight about truth is related to the authenticity of witness and not to the vulgarity of argument. Plato had vision, *theoria*. It was a vision which was congenial and helpful to the Christian. From another angle it was deceptive and



created problems for subsequent history. But it was a comprehensive vision of reality and exhibited the spirituality of truth. In contrast, Descartes represents another spirit. He and his successors argue too much, almost to the point of vulgarity. It could be that argumentative proof is not really the spirit, but the sign that the spirit is in trouble. The assumptions of Descartes appear self-evidently true to him, but are argued as if we and he needed to be convinced. Now truth is no longer the truth which shines through, the truth which is discerned; it becomes somebody's truth even when it is declared to be universally true. Truth is no longer felt as self-validating but rather as self-evident. But the spirit of truth is authentic reality, free of pretense and full of communication without force. The Spirit works and is known where truth emerges and is apprehended as truth. This is known in philosophy, too, but perhaps least of all when God becomes a necessary hypothesis.

Facets of this truth are seen more outside than inside the church. It is frequently said that the church is the most segregated institution; and although the church and labor unions cannot be identified, the record of labor unions at this point is the truth against the church. It would be a mistake to make the truth outside more significant than inside; but it is an equal mistake to speak of truth only inside the church as if God were not related to a total world. We cannot identify outside and inside, but we must relate the two. No place, so to speak, is removed from God's activity.

The creative power of the Spirit is that by which men are confirmed in something of the truth; through it they know without having to argue, though not apart from continual reexamination.

The Spirit is the active, creative, vital surging of God's power in the created order, including the lives of men. The Word is the manifestation of God's structure in the creative order and in the redemptive Word incarnate in Christ. The latter ought never to be separated from the Spirit. This created the deistic split within Protestantism, wherein the Word is connected only with redeemer and not with the creator. The Word is the wisdom in God's creation, yet is the order which is redemptive and creative. As redemptive and creative, it has order in it. The Word is apparent to those who are able to see, but it is the Spirit which gives them to see. The Spirit works, the Word is its content. Even the Word which judges is only known by the Spirit.

Where judgment and redemption are known by the believer, there the Spirit is at work. The believer in this context is able to see the creativity of God outside the church as well as within. His relation-

ship, therefore, to the world outside is one in which he accepts the positive character of a broken world, where even the destructive is destructive of something. It is really God's world in which something is radically wrong. The crucial problem is the acceptance of the radically wrong as that which demands our attention, but without condescension or over-estimation. The temptation of every minister is to be a witness against the wicked world or to be a good fellow like everybody else. But to be human under God permits neither. The pious fraud or the good fellow will not do. God is great enough to let us be human. He can transform us, not by giving us less life, but by transforming us in our humanity.

This transformation is God's continuous task. It takes place within and without the churches, though we understand it from within. And understanding it from within, we are not surprised that it happens, but rather surprised at the wonderful things which happen where they are least expected, and we can almost say where they are not expected. The Spirit in some sense sneaks up on us and this is why it is authentic. If it did not sneak up on us, we would undoubtedly rigidly channel it and destroy it.

Everything which has been said is in terms of the Spirit outside the church understood from within. It is not an outlook we ask men in general to accept. It would make no sense to say to someone outside the church, "Look, God's spirit is working in you." It is for the household of faith so to understand those outside. If you tell them, "Look, the spirit of God is working in you," it only leads to a vacuous Christianity in which all distinctions and substance disappear. It is we, who in the light of the unity of truth disclosed in Christ, see even in a fallen world something of God's life among men who do not even recognize that God is working amongst them. To them we declare the redemptive word. To them we witness in the hope that God's Spirit might in the brooding and travail of his continual creation, lead them to the unity of the triune God where creation and redemption are united at least in anticipation of the fullness of God.

The Christians need to understand that the God who is related to all creation has left something of himself which we seek in faith, though not apart from faith. It is our task to take this brokenness, this polytheistic split, and to try to see it whole in the light of the triune God. This is not a matter of addition, but rather that the addition creates something new. It transforms. The world does not recognize that its split truth is the distorted echo of a triune God's marks in a fallen world. It is the task of the Christian, not to point to the

marks, but to proclaim the redemptive word which purges and unites the distorted and fragmented truth. Only in the light of redemption is truth one, and only then is all truth seen as indeed His. This is why we do not judge or argue, but witness. We understand the outside from within, and proclaim the Gospel, that the Spirit might be united with the Word and in the unity, life may open. This is what we share, this is what we proclaim, always in joyful expectation, but never in calculation.



# The Holy Spirit and the Mission of the Church

BY A. KENNETH CRAGG

It is perhaps a strange fact that the word "mission" does not occur in the whole of the English New Testament. Yet the word "apostle" is frequent enough in the New Testament, and in our terminology the word "mission" is simply in Latin what the word "apostle" or "apostolate" is in Greek. Although nowadays what we would call the apostolicity of the Church suggests a somewhat different area of thought, nonetheless it is essentially what we have come to call elsewhere the mission of the church.

If we were to rephrase a sentence of the third paragraph of the Creed so that it ran; "one sacred, universal, missionary church," we would simply be saying in words of Latin origin what in the familiar phrase we now say in words of Greek origin. For the universal missionary Church is precisely "the catholic apostolic Church." It is this sentness attaching as a quality to the Christian Church, and the relation of the Holy Spirit to this sentness, that it is our duty to consider. We are to ask ourselves: what is the role of the Holy Spirit in this mission of the Church? We must try to answer this question with a mind on the contemporary world, but with this contemporary emphasis, we must never lose sight of our New Testament bearings.

But first in an introductory sense, a few words about the relation between the Church and Christ, between the Holy Spirit and the Church and Christ. What Christ is essentially, the Church is *instrumentally*. You remember the famous passage at the end of Ephesians 1, where St. Paul speaks about "the Church which is His body, the fullness of Him who filleth all in all." In the next chapter of the same epistle, and again at the end, comes the same metaphor of the corporate entity in which Christ dwells. In Him we are "fitly framed together an holy temple in the Lord," "in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit." Now this "Church which is His body" and which is constituted as a fellowship or community by the presence of the Holy Spirit, as the second passage insists, is the instrument in the world of that which Christ is in essence. Ponder this phrase which St. Paul uses, "the fullness of Him who filleth."

Now you sometimes suspect, I think, when you read St. Paul's

language, that he is being unnecessarily rhetorical, or that he is piling up words without meaning, or as T. R. Glover puts it, "the Holy Spirit is disorganizing his grammar." Now this does happen sometimes. But in the purport of this passage, the *pleroma* is that which "complements" or "makes complete" the thing which is entrusted to it. The flow of that which gloweth, if you like, or the combustion of that which burns. In the filament of the electric lamp is the seat, and place, and setting, of the illuminative power of the electricity. Now, without the electricity, this thing would be completely cold and grey: equally, without it, the electricity would have no occasion of light and warmth. This is something of what is meant by saying that the Church is to Christ *instrumentally* what He is *essentially*. It is in the Church that the truth of Christ shines; in this community that the truth of Christ is evident because it is operative. For this is the community to which the truth has given rise, to which Christ has given rise. It is the entity which gives occasion or opportunity for the ever present demonstration of the significance of Christ. It is in this way, surely, that the world comes to know the significance of Christ, mediated not simply in the form of an external affirmation (as a man might retail a piece of news that meant nothing to him) but made available to the world through the Church, as that in which the Church is constituted and by which the Church lives. The energy which explains or makes possible this capacity of the Church, vis-à-vis Christ and the world, according to the New Testament, is the Holy Spirit. Just as Christ in His ministry, His life, His death, and His resurrection was energized by the Holy Spirit, so also is the Church. He "through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." "As He is in this world, so are we in this world." There is for these different roles, Christ's and ours, the same dependence upon the Divine Spirit.

Here is one of the obvious necessities for Christian fellowship, since the Christian gospel is not simply a memory. It is true that our Lord said in the most intimate of all His commands: "Do this in remembrance of me" and there is a deep sense in which the Church lives by virtue of what it remembers. Anatole France once said that man is only man because he remembers. In a sense a Christian is only a Christian because he remembers—because he remembers Christ. Yet the Gospel is not *merely* a memory, as of something to which we look back, which time, namely past time, has taken wholly to itself. Rather it is a story which, historically understood in the content of our corporate memory, comes alive in our experience here

and now, in this twentieth century, in such a way and with such power that we may say it is irrelevant that almost twenty centuries of time have intervened between its history and ours. This experience in every generation of the ever present reality of the love of God in Christ, is the activity of the Holy Spirit. This is the fullness of the love of God in the hearts of those who believe. These hearts in turn, in their corporate and their personal capacity, present themselves to be "the fullness of Him who fills." Thus, in the concept of the apostle, the significance and meaning, the relevance, the good news, if you like, the import, of all that Christ is becomes available to men, in all space and time, through those who in that space and time stand in the power of the truth of Christ. This is the sense in which the Church is instrumentally what Christ is essentially. It is that which brings to men the significance of Christ. This is only possible by the continuing activity of God the Spirit through Christ, proceeding from the Father and the Son, in and by and with the Christian community and the Christian disciple.

On this basis let us think of the mission of the Church in our own time under three heads, seeking in each an understanding of this cooperation in Christ, between the Holy Spirit and ourselves. Perhaps one of the most striking phrases in the Acts of the Apostles is one that, if you are not really prepared for it, seems almost blasphemous in the sense of intimacy that it suggests. In Acts 15 we find the apostles writing "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us!" Could there be an expression that more eloquently and yet simply connoted this sense of partnership between the Spirit and the Church? What is it then in this sense that seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us if we can use these words without presumption? Let us ponder the answer under the themes of Obligation, Relationship, and Interpretation.

Now "it seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us"—so at least says the Missionary Church—that we should recognize obligation. In Acts 13, where in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians, the Holy Ghost said; "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work for which I have called them." And certainly what seemed good to the Holy Ghost seemed good to them, because they went. As far as we can see there was no grumble whatever on the part of the Antioch Church concerning the departure of these two principal men. Indeed, the relation between those who went and those who stayed seems to have been one of the closest cooperation.



"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost"; the Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work for which I have called them." Now this is but one example, perhaps a dramatic one, of this element of obligation to mission, which is the compulsion of the Holy Spirit upon the conscience of the Christian. Since this is the basis of all else, we do well to think of it here in this initial or primary position.

When the Church is self-consistent, it is missionary. When it understands the logic of its own history, it is missionary. When it gives in terms of that which it received, it is missionary. When it recognizes the secret of its own coming into being, it brings its life into being elsewhere. If you like to put it this way, the self-consistency of the church is a self-expansiveness. It is the nature of the Christian community to grow by the extension of its fellowship. The authority of the conviction by which it lives is an authority by which it must go. And in the last analysis if it does not live in the one it has no right to live in the other. The Holy Ghost in this partnership with the Christian conscience, the Church and the Spirit in this oneness of mind, proclaim that a faith which is truly held is a faith that is worthy of expression outwardly. A faith I am not willing to communicate I have not genuinely believed. This is the New Testament conviction. Why is it so? Because the content of this faith is supremely this sense of being in trust with something which by its very quality is universal, so that if it were not meant for the whole of mankind, I would not have it. The secret of this universal destiny, or inclusive dimension, of that in which I, as a Christian, stand, is the sense of the love of God. The Gospel is the consequence of the love of God in operation. And the only sufficient, the only proper, object of this love of God is the whole human family. I cannot therefore receive or recognize the gifts of this love of God, as if they belonged only to the white-skinned, or as if they were only relevant to the people of one hemisphere or continent. "God was in Christ," said the apostolic conviction, "reconciling the world unto Himself."

Such apprehension of the inclusiveness of the Gospel requires a readiness to live in these terms. This does not necessarily mean travel around the world geographically, at least not for everybody, but it does mean the recognition of the universal nature of that to which I am myself a disciple. The mission proceeds on this sense of the divine initiative. To respond to that initiative is to be ready to recognize the dimensions of the initiative itself. Therefore to make the Gospel a piece of my privacy is a contradiction in terms. This was the conviction which "seemed good to the Holy Ghost"

and to the apostles in the New Testament. Moreover, it arose not simply from this self-expression of God to man in love, but also from a vocation to involvement with man. Because the heart of this Gospel told of a Divine Love which had a universal quality, it affirmed the involvement of this love in our human situation. "God was in Christ"—why? Because Christ was among men. This if you like to think of it so is the descent, the humiliation, the self-outpouring, the kenosis of the love of God in the person of Christ. Now God did not redeem men, said the Gospel, by some kind of remote control, or heavenly fiat that left God in heaven and men down here. The terms in which the Divine redemption of men was accomplished were terms of involvement. "The Word was made flesh" and "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost" and to the Church in the days of the apostles, to perpetuate this principle. Or if you like to put it in the language of one of the greatest preachers of the 17th century, and of the English language, "I," said John Donne, "am involved in mankind."

By and large, in the days of the New Testament, the supreme desire of the philosophic mind was to be invulnerable. The Stoic, for example, was pitiless, not because he was a callous man but because he felt that this was no world to live in if you tried to be loving. Therefore you resolutely turned your eyes away from suffering because you could not be loaded down by the obligation of saving the weak and the poor. The greatest of the Greek thinkers taught that the good life was an aristocratically good life. The kingdom of heaven, if you can think of the Greeks as having such an expression, was emphatically *not* open to all believers. It was open to a few by virtue of their capacity, either by good luck, good heritage, good environment, or good something, to get out from within the mass of mankind whom they were content to leave in relative despair. Now the principle of the Incarnation by which God himself was understood to have acted, was the negation of this desire to be invulnerable. It was the belief of the Church that every man was redeemable. So they began to sing, "Thou art the kind of glory, O Christ; when Thou hast overcome the sharpness of death Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to *all* believers." The Gospel was not simply universal in the assertion of its Divine origin; it was universal in its potentiality of redeeming love. So that no manjack on the face of the earth was counted out of its power as far as God or the Church were concerned. The problems of all men were, therefore, not outside problems, they were the problems of the Christian.

"That ye also may have fellowship with us." The good life in Christ was not to be achieved by studied disregard of one's fellow man, by concentration on the aristocracy of philosophical achievement. The good life was one which demanded openness to the needs of every one of one's fellow men. The Church knew itself called to an involvement in the needs of humanity, like that which by Incarnation God Himself had recognized. Of course they knew that in like manner it would be costly. "The Holy Ghost witnesses," said St. Paul, "that bonds and afflictions abide." Of course they do. But how is the way to get out of them? The way to get out of these bonds and afflictions is to stop meddling with people's needs and to cease peddling this story into every place where you can conceivably take it. But if you determine to go on peddling the story then be ready for the bonds and afflictions. Now this costliness, this sense of involvement, is the characteristic concept of the Christian mission. There is a story in one of Mark Twain's books about a slave who went to sleep in Missouri and while he was asleep the River Mississippi cut a new course across a narrow neck of land and when he woke up he found himself in Illinois and he knew that he was a free man. Now unhappily this was only a little neck of land and a somewhat Mark Twainian incident with only one slave. But this is what the Christian Church felt about what had happened in Christ. Something decisive had made them free men, and they said, in the ancient language of the Old Testament, this is a day of good tidings, how can we hold our peace? Now this is the obligation to mission as it seems to be undertood by the Holy Ghost and the Church wherever the latter has been obedient to the former.

If we are to recognize this principle of involvement with men, to be carried out in the personal realm, the principle which lies behind the instinct to go and get alongside our fellow man just at the point of his need, of course we find ourselves confronted with a supremely difficult problem of relationships. This understanding of a world-wide obligation; this involvement because of Christ and because we stand in Christ; this involvement in all the world runs into a formidable mass of problems so exacting, so difficult that sometimes if you stay awake at night thinking about them, they fill you with a darkness of horror. How can they all be surmounted? For in this 20th Century, the white man having through his external political history so seriously turned against him many growing parts of the world: growing in population, growing in self-awareness, growing in potential importance to the future of humanity, how shall he be the bearer of



these truths? What is going to happen when his good is evil spoken of? What when people there, or even back here, tell him that this sense of involvement in the needs of men is nothing more in the end than a projection of his old imperialism? And that now that he can no longer be imperialist politically he continues to be so religiously. Why don't you be a spiritual isolationist? Cultivate your own Christian garden and get rid of a few more weeds in your own domestic religious set-up and leave other men to their religions too. Do we not after all, each of us, worship the God who takes care of us? Why should we not, therefore, be content with national co-existence and cultural coexistence without expressiveness so that none of us trespasses on the preserve of the other? Do we not see that mission is an outmoded concept? That conversion from one faith to another is an irritant and that what we are striving for is some form of political coexistence between nations which presupposes the religious coexistence of their various cultures? For culture and religion inextricably interpenetrate. Furthermore, there are barriers of race, and of geography. This enterprise of involvement of mankind is so thwarted with misunderstandings and so encompassed with infirmity that it is perhaps not a feasible, or viable, proposition in the world as we know it?

What does the Christian have to say? What in these circumstances seems "good to the Holy Ghost," do you think? The admission that these arguments are sound; the recognition that the project is exceedingly difficult, and that therefore we are too small to undertake it? This may seem good to us, but I think not to the Holy Ghost Who is accustomed to using the weak things of this world. Now the problems, and difficulties and deterrents, these formidable, massive obstacles in the course of the Christian mission, indeed resistance to the very concept, within the Church itself, are to be occasions of a truer Christ-likeness. For the Holy Ghost is precisely the One who makes bridges into the minds of men and does this by using the stones that he takes out of the stumbling blocks. This relationship to a common humanity must be pursued. We must learn to confront other men's faiths in the humility which we learn in Christ. We must learn to teach the whole Church that missionary expression is not cultural aggrandizement and that we can find no valid excuses for withholding the Christ that all the world needs because it is difficult for some people to understand what we are about in trying to share Him.

The business of inter-religious relationship is one of the most

searching areas confronting not only the theology of the 20th century, but the life of the Spirit within the whole Church. It may be said with truth that the problems of science and materialism, the problems of scholarship directed to the documentary sources of the faith, were among the major problems of theology in the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries. The salient problem of the Christian theologian and the Christian believer at the present time—in a world which is more and more geographically one unit, in a world where peace is indivisible, in a world where nations meet in the United Nations organization that fifty years ago were culturally and politically very far apart is the problem of inter-religious relationship. How does the Christian mission stand in this context? What, in this situation, seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us? For there has to be a partnership here. Where can we find our bearings and what can we say to all these problems?

May I remind you that there are many issues in life where perhaps what finally matters is not answers but attitudes. There are questions here that beggar the wisdom of man. Nobody can come up with easy and tidy answers to all the problems of the relationship of the Christian faith to the other faiths of the world, but at least we can discover attitudes: attitudes of humility; attitudes of stewardship; that we have that which is infinitely worth while and which is not ours to monopolize. That we have nothing that we did not receive. That the understanding that Christ is unique is not to say that Christ is exclusive. That we do not point the situation between the Christian faith and the other faiths of men in colors that are only dark and light. That we recognize that there is a sense in which, through self-surrender, all men whatever their religious background come to self-fulfillment when they reckon with the truth of Christ. We can have attitudes even where we cannot always have answers. This is a field where Christian self-consistency is perhaps more searching than anywhere else in the whole wide world. St. Paul said on one occasion, surely an occasion of great exaltation; "We have the mind of Christ." Surely we do, potentially; that is what the Holy Spirit is all about. But what does the mind of Christ say to the Christian who is seeking to be Christianly related to the Hindu, or the Muslim, or the Buddhist, or the Communist, or the animist? That he must be constructively and lovingly related in the truth to these men is inescapable as part of his Christianity. He cannot say "I am a Christian, and it is a matter of indifference to me what these faiths mean, or whether they are leading, or what their con-

temporary problems are, or how Christianity bears upon them." There must be expression. There must be relationship and it is our duty to discover in and with the Holy Spirit what this relation must be. Nor can we get all our wisdom in this sense from the external circumstances of the New Testament because the confrontation of the Christian and the other faiths in this century is vastly more urgent, vastly more confusing, and vastly more varied, than it was in the days of the New Testament. By and large, believers and unbelievers in the Mediterranean basin of New Testament Christian expansion belonged to one world. Geographically, culturally, they were neither Greek or Roman, or Judaic together, and in spite of the vast differences between Jew and Greek, between barbarian and free, they were far nearer together linguistically, emotionally, territorially, than you and I are today with the cleavages that sunder white and non-white, western and non-western, Christian and non-Christian. Let me not identify these in any necessary sense except simply being items of diversity that are not obviously co-terminus. So we have perhaps a bigger task than the New Testament leaders and thinkers ever faced, yet did not Jesus himself speak of "greater things than these shall ye do because I go to the Father?" Now forgive me if I refer to this simply in terms of the task but let us seek the attitudes that Christ teaches. And then little by little, as long as we do not expect them too quickly or think they must be too tidy, He will supply us with the answers.

Finally and very briefly, there is the field of interpretation, resulting from obligation and relationship. We are involved in mankind for two profoundly Christian reasons, that we are in debt and that we are in trust. Now how shall we interpret, as missionaries, as those who are sent? You do not need, I think, to be reminded that Christian theology has lived from the beginning in interpretation. The New Testament itself is not comprehensible except as the volume of a missionary church. The need for Gospels arose in the expansion in time and space of the Christian community. Even more obviously the existence of the Epistles derives from the need for intercommunication in a growing entity. Christian theology from the beginning was a theology of expression and so it is now. To know in this context is to make known that him who heareth says: "Come." You see in the New Testament itself many activities of Christian expression, Christian interpretation, and we have to follow these examples in the inter-religious contacts of our time. Many of the Aramaic terms with which the Gospels began in Palestine were completely incomprehensible to



the Greek world into which the Church expanded. As we heard last night, the concept of the Kingdom of God was very quietly dropped in St. John's gospel and the idea of eternal life took over from it. To speak about the Son of Man among Greek listeners was entirely meaningless, and the phrase, though frequent in the gospels, slips out of the Epistles. Hellenistic Christianity laid hold of the new title of *Kurios* or Lord, borrowed surely from the mystery religions, but holding a very real clue to the meaning of Christ apprehensible to those people. For the idea of the *Kurios* was one whose message would become clear to you when you submitted your allegiance to his authority. And on condition of discipleship yourself you would discover both the truth and the joy of what he could tell you. And so this title, borrowed from an external source, became entirely fitting for the expression of the relation of the Christian to Christ. To speak of Jesus as the king was to use the official Greek title for the emperor, and was obviously laden with unintended connotations, so that the other title took its place.

In the Logos concept itself, the writer lays hold on a profound idea of the Greek philosophy. The idea that there was a principle or movement of reason which was pursued when honest and open minds met together for the free engagement of discussion. And when they put their minds together in this way and honestly said together the *pros* and *cons* of their argument, they would mutually be led by this thread of discussion to the arrival at that truth, which none of them would wish to call in question. This thread was the Platonic *logos* which brought them to the end. The identification of this idea through many other new answers and vicissitudes with the person of Christ was not only a great achievement of Christian interpretation, it was a timeless gesture of the meaning of Christian expressiveness. As William Temple has it, the evangelist was here seeking common ground with his readers. It was of no use to tell Hellenized Ephesians that Messiah has come. They were not expecting any Messiah and were not interested. It would be like trying to excite an English audience by proclaiming the arrival of the Mahdi. Now in place of those meanings or titles which had no significance for those who heard, the mind of the Church of that time produced these arguments *ad hominem*, means of expressing the truth that were apprehensible by those to whom the truth was sent. This is the interpretive function of the Christian mission. And how can it proceed except in that these expressions seem good to the Holy Ghost and to us? This is a labor of patience, striving

to illuminate the meaning of the Gospel with the concepts of the cultures of men.

"We have this treasure," says the apostle, "in earthen vessels." He doesn't simply mean that he is weak in body and that the church is not very numerous and that the whole impact of Christianity measured externally is very feeble. He means surely by earthen vessels the minds into which the notions of the Gospel has to be poured. They may not be adequate, but ideas grow by virtue of that which you put into them. So the Christian interpreter strives first of all for the purpose of expression; he strives to understand. This is why we believe here that the study of other faiths is essential, indispensable to the business of the Christian mission. We cannot say that all we need to know is the Gospel and we go to preach this like a phonograph record. We must enter vicariously into what it is to be a Hindu in the world today if we are truly going to involve ourselves in the humanity of India, and the same is true of every realm. Now this is the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Christian mission so that men may themselves discover the significance of Christ. We are not those who go to say "Here is Christ in whom we have discovered the clue to God and man, and we seek that you would think of Him and try to understand what He can do for you." We are not among those who base the Christian mission on what is worst in the faiths of men. We do not go to India primarily because there used to be, or still is, child marriage. We do not base the Christian mission simply on the corruption of other men's lives. We have enough corruption in our own world. The Christian Gospel is primarily stated in terms of the highest of every faith, and it is to this that it speaks. We are not seeking to compel men to be their worst doctrinally, so that the worth of Christ may be the more manifest. Surely this is what seems good to the Holy Spirit. But if it is blasphemous to say so, that at least, is how the church talked when it went about its ancient mission in the Mediterranean world.

Now there are many more things which might have been said, but I hope that I have suggested enough. The Holy Spirit and mission; the Holy Spirit as the source of obligation; as the inspirer of the sense of a relationship in compassion to all men's needs; the Holy Spirit enabling us to discover the true conditions, and pattern and temper of our relationship to all men; and the Holy Spirit, our partner (may we say it?) in this supremely important business of interpretation; but it does not rest only in the realm of men's ideas. The Christian, in the last analysis, interprets Christ by what he is; by his deeds of compassion which are tokens of the Kingdom of heaven. Deeds by which

he is not bribing faith but demonstrating that which in his spoken message is articulate. He is always careful to divorce faith and works. To divorce, that is, the works of the mission and the faith of the new believer, lest their faith should stand only in the philanthropy of men and not in the power of God. Now all these areas of interpretation are exceedingly delicate, exceedingly exacting, and how apart from this sense of God being with us to guide our minds and wills could they possibly even begin to be faced? And let me remind you finally, that in the end, the continuity of the Christian mission in the world, however its circumstances may change, is only possible by an energy which is one of the New Testament words for the activity of the Spirit. The spirit of fire which kindles and glows, this is the life of the expressive church. "For no heart is pure," said Seeley, "that is not passionate. No virtue safe which is not enthusiastic . . ." May we not say that apostolicity is the passion and the enthusiasm of the Church, in proportion to which the Church itself is safe and true?

# Modern Public Relations and the Church

BY G. FRANK SWEET

Public Relations, both as a practice and a concept, is a major phenomenon of America in the mid-Twentieth Century. It is, of course, practiced in other countries, but nowhere has it flourished as in the United States. Nowhere else is it so widely practiced, so pretentious, so respectable and disreputable, so widely suspected and so extravagantly extolled.

Perhaps no term in common usage means so many different things to so many people. This is true both within and without the field. When the editors of a publication called "Public Relations News" sought definitions of Public Relations from leading practitioners, they encountered a bewildering variety of concepts. It was variously described as a science, a system, an art, a process, a function, a relationship, a humanizing genius, a term, a business, a profession, a method, an activity, a program, a policy, a pattern of behavior, and, as a moral force.

One of the reasons for the confusion is that Public Relations is a new and very dynamic activity and its boundaries have not been definitely staked out. Another is that many speak of Public Relations in terms of what it *should be* rather than in terms of what it *is*—a going activity. A third reason is that the term is used in several different senses. Thus "public relations" can signify the complex relationships of an organization or an individual with the public at large or with certain groups, i.e. "small publics". It can also mean the esteem, or lack of esteem, with which one is regarded by the public; thus we say, "Such and such a Company or organization enjoys good public relations." It also, and most usually, identifies ways and means used by executives and practitioners to bring about more satisfactory relationships with the public. The statement, "Public relations is a means of bringing about better public relations", would be a philological absurdity but, technically, correct.

Agreement upon a definition with *utility* and *meaning* is more than a problem in semantics, though that's part of the difficulty. Fundamentally, it's the long-term task of crystallizing a concept and codifying a profession. This is in process. Amidst the confusion there is emerging substantial agreement on the role of Public Relations. In the center of its mushrooming growth there is a solid layer of sound, ethical practice. At its core is the concept of Public Relations as a



systematic means of repairing and restoring the broken lines of communication in America's highly industrialized and urbanized society.

A major cause of confusion is the popular tendency to equate Public Relations with Publicity. Someone has made an effort to differentiate the two this way:

"Public Relations is the continuing process by which management endeavors to obtain the good-will of its customers, its members, and the public at large; inwardly, through self-analysis and correction; outwardly, through all the means of expression."

"Publicity, on the other hand, is really News Dissemination which is a major tool of Public Relations and is employed to inform special publics and the public at large as to the activities and objectives of the organization.

The importance of public opinion was recognized by the Greeks and Romans; the latter coined the expression, "*Vox populi, vox Dei*"—"The voice of the people is the voice of God"—and Machiavelli in his instructions to princes gave emphasis to this concept. The Lord Chancellors in England several centuries ago were known as "Keepers of the King's Conscience" which would not too inaptly describe the role of many Public Relations people today in the field of business. But Public Relations as we know it is comparatively new. Its beginning was within the lifetime of many here today. The earliest practitioners were known as "press agents".

It is interesting to note that one of the earliest and most spectacular of the press agents, P. T. Barnum, was concerned with the attitudes of various "publics" and took steps to win their favorable approval. He cultivated opinion makers such as Kings, Presidents, Governors and other notables. He took special pains to influence the younger generation indirectly through their teachers and directly by publishing juvenile books under his own name. He patronized animal welfare societies and gave lectures for charity. He countered the hostility of the churches by publicity which stressed the Christian character of his shows and by admitting clergymen and their wives without charge.

I mentioned earlier that Public Relations might have to do with certain groups—i.e. "small publics". I believe it would be helpful for us to take a look at just who comprises some of these "small publics". We'll do that in just a moment, but in order to recognize the Public Relations problem and the Public Relations potential with each of these "small publics", there is, to me, one important delineation we must make. In fact, I suspect it is, of necessity, a conscious or sub-conscious decision you are called upon to make with annoying fre-

quency. It is this—are we talking about the *Church's* Public Relations or is it the *Clergyman's* Public Relations?

Now, bearing this question in mind, let's take a quick run-down on the various small publics you are called upon to consider, contend with, convince, and cooperate with, in the productive performance of any given Public Relations problem. The first might be called your "official family" . . . those men and women who make up your ruling or governing body (your Board, Trustees, Session, etc.) plus Elders, Deacons, Superintendent of Sunday School, Young People's leaders, *et al.* A second would be *active members* of your church. Closely related to this group is another that might be distinguished as regular attendants who are *not* members. Then you have that uninspiring body whom we shall call, in a spirit of Christian restraint, *inactive members*. (This particular assembly will, like a Sputnik or Explorer, be visible for a brief moment one week from next Sunday. If you look sharply, and act quickly, it will give you your annual opportunity to wish them a Merry Christmas, for you likely will not see them again until then.)

Forgive my gentle cynicism and let's get back to our various "publics". The next is one that is terribly important to *some* churches and relatively insignificant to others. I refer to the immediate neighborhood—those people who are *not* associated with your church but whose homes are adjacent to, or affected by, your activities. Obviously, the next is the entire town or city wherein you are located and, finally, the various media . . . the press, radio, television.

It is immediately apparent to you that each group is less interested, less involved, less near the center of activity and, usually, larger than the one previously mentioned. It is much like the oft-used illustration of the pebble thrown into the mill pond. The pebble is any act, any word, any experience. It starts what we might call a "Public Relations effect", and—bear this in mind—once the pebble is dropped, the ripples spread out implacably. They might affect some more than others, but they cannot be stopped.

In considering Public Relations and the Church, there is an obvious and usually clearly defined division into two types—*internal* and *external*. More often than not, the same approach to any given act of Public Relations can be used with both. But, like so many generalities, there are *always* the exceptions. These are the ones to watch. Consider for a moment these two simple illustrations. You, personally, believe that the time has come to build an addition to your existing facilities. Let's say you need more Sunday School space. Before you

open your mouth, plan carefully the *relations* with your various publics. With your official family you must share *everything*. Together, with them, you consider need, utility, timing, land acquisition, size, futures, cost, fund-raising, selection of individuals to take on particular responsibility, and *many* problems. Then, they join you in considering relations with your entire church body where the problems and considerations are not so multitudinous, but may prove to be more demanding and complicated. Now, in this illustration, the effect of this move is *not* limited to your own parishioners. It *can* and *will* affect the neighborhood, the town fathers . . . and, in varying degrees, the entire community. The Public Relations *angles* may be quantitatively minor but qualitatively mountainous. In actual experience they could prove onerous.

We said we'd consider *two* illustrations. This one might involve the selection of a new organist and choir director. Do the town fathers care? . . . as such, not one whit! The community as a whole? . . . No! In other words, it is of little or no consequence to people *outside* your church. How about those on the inside? To many it will not be too important, but to others it might take the patience of a Job and the wisdom of a Solomon to handle the Public Relations details to everyone's satisfaction. All of you have, at one time or another, heard the choir referred to as the "War Department" of the church. Fortunately, this is far more fiction . . . than fact. Nonetheless, if ever it *was* true, I respectfully submit that the chances are *excellent* that the Public Relations effort was anything but. However, I'm a bit off the subject. The point is that these two illustrations, though they are over-simplified, highlight the totally different types of Public Relations challenges one faces in a church.

Perhaps it would be in order to interpolate at this point one irrefutable fact—*all* of us, be we a church, a clergyman, a religious educator, or even an advertising man—*all* of us already have *some* sort of Public Relations. It may be good, or bad, or mediocre. But we *have* it. For this reason then, it is *not* a question of whether you, or your church, should *have* Public Relations—rather, it is a question of "what are we *doing* about our relations with our various and sundry 'publics'?"

Come with me now, if you will, and we'll explore an important truth in Public Relations, a truth that the uninitiate sometimes do not recognize, or understand, or even believe. It is this. All too often, folks are apt to think of Public Relations in terms like "glad-handing", making everybody like you or your product or your service. *Not so.*

Public Relations is frequently *not* "glad-handing" . . . *not* an attempt to make *everybody* love you or your actions or your decisions.

Let me illustrate. Right here in our community we have many large businesses and world-famous corporations. Currently we are experiencing what some choose to call a mild recession. Under these circumstances management is forced to make decisions which are not only unpalatable to them, but even more distasteful to many whose lives and pocketbooks are directly affected. One such decision is the necessity of handing dismissal slips to a number of people. Inherent in this action which has been necessitated by forces outside the control of any one management group, is not one single iota of "glad-handing" or what might be summed up in the word "plus" for either the company, the employees who have been dismissed, or the community at large. Yet here is a tangible, current and all-too-familiar problem in Public Relations.

Now, if it is true that our business and industrial world finds itself having to handle a Public Relations problem concerning circumstances that cannot please everyone, it is even more true for the Church. If your church, or any group within your church, has to perform a function or make a decision, it might well prove to be not the most acceptable thing to *all* concerned. If this happens to be the case, let me counsel you—above everything else—to recognize, and accept, the facts and then be governed accordingly.

Though I have done a fair share of lay preaching, I am not an ordained minister so I trust you will forgive a bit of "preaching". I respectfully submit to you gentlemen of the cloth here this morning, and, in fact, to all of you . . . the Christian message *is* not, *cannot*, and *dare* not be one of "glad-handing" and one that will cause *everybody* to love you. The Gospel of Jesus Christ can have no truck with sin. It cannot even suggest compromise with sin. Of necessity, where sin is, there is a sinner, and a sinner is a person . . . a part of one of our "publics". Therefore, the Christlike words and Christlike actions that you have dedicated your lives to following and preaching are, by their very nature, going to cause some people to do other than sing your praises. Go back with me if you will 2,000 years to a story that is familiar to all of us. A collection of rascals was being driven from the house of God—by force—with a whip. And whose hand was wielding the whip? none other than the Son of Man, Jesus Christ Himself. Do you suspect for one moment that those particular individuals loved Him or His actions . . . or his Public Relations?

Let's bring it right up to date. Only a few short weeks ago a most



respectable and respected organization right here in our own community was faced with what would have been the most delicate Public Relations problem in its entire career. The issue was one of race—of segregation. Days of worry, talk, considerations, compromises, suggestions took place. But, thanks to a level-headed and Christian, Public Relations businessman whose voice shone through the babble like the clear, distinct notes of a flute through an entire symphony orchestra, the issue was resolved in the only way possible . . . “We must do that which is right”. Then—the responsibility of those concerned with Public Relations was to *explain* or *justify* the action that had to be taken. These words might serve as another of the many tools used in doing a good Public Relations job—to *explain*, to *justify*, to *win over*.

I said a moment ago that the action might not always be acceptable to all concerned. When I wrote that line, it reminded me of a rather cute story which you might enjoy this morning. The city editor sent a young reporter out to cover a story. The reporter came back and said that the man involved was not inclined to give out the facts. Furthermore, he looked to him like a rather tough character. The city editor again sent him out and told him not to come back without the story. Once again the reporter returned and told the editor that the fellow not only refused to give him the facts—he actually “pulled a gun on me”. To this the editor replied, “You go back and tell that guy he can’t intimidate *me*!”

Though it is more dangerous, because I must of necessity talk in generalities, we probably should endeavor to get down to brass tacks. Here’s an *extremely* simple and familiar one—yet so often overlooked. It is the matter of appearance. By this I mean the appearance of the physical plant you call your church. This includes not only the condition of the exterior walls, the grounds, the parking lot, the pews—but such details as bent wire coat-hangers in the coat room, last week’s literature in the entrance hall, a burnt-out light bulb, any curtains or drapes that show soil and hang so limply that it is obvious they haven’t been tended to for a year or more. You don’t *see* these in your *own* church. The change has been so gradual that you are unaware of some of these things, but I, coming into your church as a stranger, see them immediately—they are *most* conspicuous. *This* is Public Relations—Bad. (I, as a visitor, might have been considering becoming a member—and these little things just might cause me to reconsider.)

The impression made by your church upon visitors and, in fact, the community, depends upon a number of items both large and small. Many matters need to be considered not only in the light of possible

effects on the *budget*, but also as to the manner in which decisions may have influence, for good or bad, on public attitudes.

Here's another. Letter-writing. You are probably saying, "How far afield can this fellow go?" "How simple and unimportant can his illustrations be?" That, ladies and gentlemen, is just the point. It is these *seemingly* simple and *seemingly* unimportant details that can cause the best laid plans of mice and men, etc.

Practically no one any more writes: "Yours of the 16 inst. received and contents noted", but the tradition of stilted phrases which once was the fashion in business English lives on. The trend in business communication is definitely in the direction of informality and the friendly touch. *Yours* should be the same.

While content is of importance, it is even more vital that correspondence be promptly acknowledged. Even though information requested is not immediately available, the correspondent should at least have the courtesy of a prompt reply. Yes, letter-writing is important to your Public Relations even though it represents only a small part of the total task.

Time simply does not permit my exploring with you *all* of the avenues to be traversed in *all* of the facets of Public Relations. However, we might spend a few minutes considering a couple of practical suggestions on how best to reach the broad public.

Here's one for the publicity side of your Public Relation's efforts. Of absolute preeminence is the fact that whatever you want to put out . . . *must be NEWS*. This point cannot be too strongly emphasized. And *news* can best be defined as that which is of interest to those who will read or hear your story.

Once upon a time, when a Public Relations man had a piece of news at hand, he found it sufficient to write a news release, give it proper distribution, and let it go at that. But, to an increasing extent, it is becoming necessary to re-do each item—one release for the daily papers, another for the weeklies, a third for radio, and a news release plus something visual for TV stations.

The needs of each are different. Generally speaking, what the *daily* paper is looking for is the *action* involved; the who, what, when, where, and why. What the weekly editor wants is the "local" angle—the "home-town" touch. In radio newsrooms they're looking for news presented in a chatty, informal, conversational style—and with great *brevity*.

Now, very likely, this is carrying the assignment too far—going a bit too deep—for your *practical* consideration. This no doubt is true, but

I wanted to share with you what *can* be done. And if, perchance, you are in a position to approach your general news releases in this manner, it will pay off handsomely in more inches in the press—more time on the air.

Just as a growing corporation tends to lose touch with its stockholders, so a growing church tends to lose that close personal touch with its individual members. This is another tremendously important problem which can come under the heading of Public Relations. Unless your church has or can afford an assistant or associate minister, about the only course of action open to you is a bulletin or “house organ” of some sort. This, like your letters, should be kept informal, chatty, personal.

Incidentally, mentioning an assistant or associate minister reminds me of *another* Public Relations problem. Possibly some of you have already run into this one. Mrs. X says, rather pettishly, “I don’t *want* the number two man—I don’t see why the number *one* man can’t call on *me*.” This is a problem not unfamiliar to me. Because my name is the one by which our Company is known, many persons insist on seeing, or talking with, me personally. Yet, frequently, these same people could be *better* served, honestly, by others in our organization. This is something you might bring up in your workshop sessions later today.

Again let me hurry along by merely mentioning two other areas (they are legion) which give you an opportunity to do a productive Public Relations job—your annual reports, your Annual Meeting. To each of these you can devote some thought which I suspect will prove interesting and helpful to you.

Leaving this kind of thinking, join me if you will in considering just what it is that we have that requires a workshop on Public Relations.

There is today, moving in and out amongst us, a coterie that labors under the following delusion: “Hire a top-notch Public Relations man and it matters not how good or bad our product or service is—he can make the public like it”. Unfortunately this is true—but only for a very short time. In the long pull (and the Church can *only* be interested in the long pull) this attitude comes a cropper. In the light of this, let’s look at our “product” or our “service”. (And I’m sure that all of you know how I am using that word “service”. I do *not* refer to the “service” I attend Sunday mornings at 11 o’clock.) *Is* it good? *Is* it worthwhile? *Do* we have to cover up or make apologies for it? The answer to that need not be labored here. Supposing that we took only the *human* approach to Christianity . . . that we accepted *only* the

example and teachings of the *man* Jesus, we would have (and I say it reverently) the finest product in the world. When we add to that our acceptance of Jesus *Christ*, God's Son, Saviour of the World and Giver of Life Eternal, we have that which is beyond compare. So . . . our product is second to none—it is incomparable—it is glorious.

At one of these conclaves I mentioned earlier, one of those present was needling just a bit when he asked, "If the Church were doing its job, properly, would there be any need for such a Public Relations seminar as this?" During the past several weeks I have given this one quite a bit of thought. It was easy to merely say, "Yes, such a seminar as this is needed," but *how* and *why* and what do we hope to accomplish? I came up with an answer that satisfied *me*. I trust it will you. First, let's do a *better* job of teaching Christianity. There is more than *one* way to skin a cat . . . there is more than *one* way to point a soul to Christ. Paul *argued* some into the Kingdom; he *won* still others by *logic* and *reasoning*; he *exhorted* many; he *led* a vast number; he even *sang* one man and his entire household into eternal salvation! You know that last one . . . it is recorded in the 16th chapter of Acts.

Let's go off in a completely different direction for a moment. If we considered this whole problem of Public Relations as a wheel, and the Church at the hub, one of the spokes which lead us out to the rim (remember that the rim is not only held *to* the hub *by* the spokes, but joins all of the spokes together and gives strength to the whole) is: Public Relations for a church starts on the *inside*. From here it moves to the *outside*. *Internal* Public Relations must be *good*. If not, the influence of your church, my church, *the* Church is minimized. We might sum much of this up by acknowledging the church's *role* . . . prophetically. Not only do you gentlemen already know *this* role, but you are much better qualified to discuss it than I. I would like to *repeat two* points I made earlier. The Church's role, *public relations-wise*, is *not* to make everybody love it, but to propagate the Christian message. Incidentally, though we as Christians cannot expect to make everybody love us, we should as Christians, in the words of the old spiritual, "Makes me love everybody." The second point is that our Public Relations job, then, is to *disseminate the news*, or to *explain*, or *justify*, or to know what bait to use, on what size hook, in order that we might become the fishers of men that you and I are expected to be.

I have another point, but it is much like carrying coals to Newcastle. In fact, it is a bit like the myopic minister who stands in front of his very faithful little flock every Sunday morning exhorting and



even berating folks for lack of attendance. The people who *need* the sermon aren't there to hear it. And those within hearing distance . . . don't need it. What I want to say next is like that. You people here this morning don't need to hear it . . . those that should are not here. In spite of that I will say it.

In the past 20 to 30 years the demands and pressures on clergymen have increased tremendously. I don't believe the average congregation or even the average official body of any given church quite appreciates this fact. Parishioners and governing bodies alike must recognize this and insist on an up-to-date job re-evaluation. When they come up with the answers that I am sure are inevitable, this new and greatly increased workload will have to be recognized and "sold" to the parishioners and the community. And now—in the face of this which all of *you* recognize, you show up here today only to take on even more load. But, here again, I'm sure you are laying up for yourselves, treasures in heaven.

Some of you may recognize the name William Staubel. He is President of Holo Krome Screw Corporation. At a meeting not more than a month ago . . . and it was *not* a church meeting . . . Bill said, "We can't preach one thing and practice another." What simpler yet more effective way could we sum up the entire approach of the Church to *modern Public Relations*.

And now I have what is perhaps the word for which you have been waiting for some time . . . I am about to sit down.

May I leave with you, thoughtfully and *deliberately*, this apostolic benediction . . .

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Make you *perfect in every good work* to do his will, working in *you* that which is *wellpleasing in his sight*, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen."

For myself, I take another portion of Scripture. Remember, at the very beginning, I acknowledged that this subject was too big for me? My only hope is that you, with Christian indulgence, will say of me what was said of Mary—"She hath done what she could."

# Appreciation of President Russell Henry Stafford

BY PROFESSOR EDNA M. BAXTER

Looking over the activities and achievements of our President Stafford makes one ask how he could ever have had time for travels and meetings from Israel to Hawaii, in addition to endless speeches, board meetings, the building of new houses and other structures for the campus, and the reading of that colossal pile of books we see in his office.

When I consider your works, Mr. President, how can I ever find the proper words of praise and recognition? All of you gathered here know perfectly well that our President has all the words on the tip of his own tongue. No man has ever had so many words which pour out with ease and rapidity.

If I were a Shakespeare or at least a Mark Antony, I would deliver an oration and present it in French. (I know of our President's devotion to French literature.)

In the vein of Abraham Lincoln, I would remind ourselves that what I say here will be little known nor long remembered, but what our President has done here for our institution will live on far beyond the power of my words to add or to detract.

Less than a decade-and-a-half ago, our Trustees called Dr. Stafford to be our President and he soon brought to the campus a new climate, one dedicated to the proposition that the faculties of all the schools should receive equal consideration and respect; that even women could have a proper place in the foundation society; that all the schools should become known and recognized throughout our own country and even the rest of the world; that funds should be raised for buildings and salaries; and that more new faculty should be found to carry out the functions of the schools.

Tonight, we are gathered here to honor this, our President, after what seems an incredibly short stay with us. Let us review just a few of our impressions of his contributions and achievements while on our campus.

First, I would call attention to his courtesy and kindness. Witness the deep, broad divan in front of his spacious desk where we have been welcomed over and over again to discuss our concerns relaxed and in an atmosphere of humor and hopefulness.

Has any other president in the land ever covered his four high

and wide walls even to the ceiling with books which seem to have been read by the owner! Of course, our President has reiterated time and again that he is not a scholar. Constantly, however, I have wished for his devotion to books to rub off on our students. When our President came here he said, "I expect two things of students: that they use plenty of soap and love books."

As your administration approaches its close, Mr. President, some of us regret that we have not insisted on your sharing more of your study and wide reading with us as a faculty. We have deprived ourselves of vast riches.

We hope, however, in the future that you will be invited to return to our campus and to teach a course on "Reading" to our students.

Tonight, we are reminded of the faculty you have helped us to add to our campus leadership. The School of Religious Education is especially indebted to you for aiding us to have our able Dean Clark, for our creative teacher, the Reverend Ruth Sanger Conant, for our exceptional and distinguished child psychologist and pre-school educator, Dr. Georgiana Sie and for our most capable Dr. Helen Khoobyar. All the other schools have numerous distinguished faculty names to add to this list. Last of all, you have brought to us our energetic and capable Dikran Hadidian to manage the Case Memorial Library.

Mr. President, you have helped us to move forward with the dream of our beloved President Mackenzie by the creation of the Institute of Social Work. Perhaps our next step should be provision for a department of music to care for the needs of students of religious education and for music in the churches in foreign lands.

You have helped many of our Seminary faculty to have suitable housing. Considerable advance has been made in student housing for married students of the Seminary and the Kennedy School of Missions.

Yes, and you have finally given us an atmosphere of worship in our beautifully refurbished chapel.

The ugly scar on our beautiful tower which lingered so many years, has at last been covered by the much needed and beautiful Gillette Building housing the Kennedy School of Missions.

You have represented us on many occasions and before many groups of people far and near, at home and abroad. We have been proud to have you as our representative for we have always known that you would have the right words to say and the appropriate information for such gatherings and events.

In our faculty meetings you have vigorously avoided tedium; things have moved faster than any we have ever known!

Tonight, we are sorry to realize that you are soon to vacate your scholarly office. We shall miss you greatly. We hope that you will have glorious years ahead to write and to share your wisdom and scholarship and vision.

You have become a permanent part of our Foundation life and this fact will become more and more apparent to honor you as the years pass.

In behalf of all the faculty, I thank you for all you have done. We honor you. We admire you. We are proud to have had you as the President of The Hartford Seminary Foundation.



# Matthew Spinka: Representative Christian Thinker

BY FORD L. BATTLES

No more appropriate title for a brief tribute to Matthew Spinka can be found than the name he has given to his justly admired and appreciated course in the history of Christian thought: Representative Christian Thinker. Yet the simple words 'Representative Christian' might fit even better, for thought embraces but one part of his life and work as a Christian man. And he is 'representative' not in the sense of the average 20th century American Protestant Christian, but is 'representative' of the Christian heritage in its truly Catholic sense.

Few of us realize how broadly and deeply Matthew represents the Christian tradition. His voice is heard today in a Czech village, his written words are read in a thousand libraries, his encyclopedia articles have entered a million households. As wide as his daily activities are spread in space, so wide are his scholarly interests spread in time. His books and articles range from a history of the West Hartford Church, shortly to be published, to the medieval and ancient Church from America to the Balkans and Russia.

This and much more has been packed into one lifetime of work and study. Yet, with all his learning, Matthew has not, as many of his fellow historians, forsaken the priceless qualities of humility and humor. Like all good historians he is an incurable punster, and has an inexhaustible fund of droll stories. To my knowledge he has never written a slashing review of a book; he has never taken delight in grinding an opponent down to size. When he has felt constrained to differ with another, his criticisms have always been given in Christian love and without arrogance. As editor of the journal, *Church History*, he read hundreds of manuscripts submitted for publication, always treating their authors with gentleness yet firmness. In this aspect of his career, Matthew was truly the Christian Scholar, in all he did ever seeking to know the mind of Christ.

Still, in the writing of his own books and the editing of others', only a part of the man is revealed to us. It has been in the classroom and the study that Matthew has best shown his warm Christian spirit. And it has been his classroom that generations of students have gratefully recalled in later years. Not every student has been drawn to Matthew's teaching. Some have found him brusque and short and impatient toward questions; others have found him unduly dogmatic.

But most, even those who reacted unfavorably when they sat under him, look back upon his 'Representative Christian Thinkers,' or his 'Critique of Modern Revolutionary Movements' or his 'Great Christian Classics' as decisive in their spiritual growth.

Wherein lies the peculiar strength of these courses, of this man who teaches them? Matthew has the happy capacity of driving to the heart of the matter. He leads us through the layers of confusing verbiage to the core of what a man truly believed, to 'the meat of the cocoanut' as he aptly phrases it. Men and movements in the history of the Church take on clarity under his skillful eye; and their relevance for the struggling minister in the parish, in constant danger of being swallowed up by his daily round, is driven home by Matthew's trenchant phrase. With Matthew, Church History is truly a divine science, the passionate pursuit of the mind of Christ in the unfolding of His Church. We who have studied under him have grasped from him something of the breathless enthusiasm of that quest.

Matthew the teacher, however does not exhaust the categories of our 'Representative Christian.' There is another aspect of his life, known only to a few, from which his writing, his editing, and his teaching draw sustenance. Here husband and wife compete in friendly rivalry: painting. Like another great historian, Winston Churchill, Matthew is a devotee of brush and pallet. A clear day in fall or spring or a long summer's day in Maine, has often seen Zdenka and Matthew on a village green, by the pounding surf, or beside a quiet lake—following their chosen avocation. Those of us who have not this skill—to transmute what the eye sees into the deft strokes of the brush upon canvas—greatly envy Zdenka and Matthew. And when we see a beautiful work of illumination from Matthew's hand, we know that our 'Representative Christian' has preserved in his skill yet another of the priceless gifts of the Christian Church.

Matthew occasionally gives a course entitled, 'Great Christian Classics.' This is a very prosaic name for an introduction to some of the greatest devotional literature of the Church. The writings of the Christian mystics, which occupy a large place in the subject matter of this course, are for Matthew a counterpoise to the polemic of theologian, the intrigue and failure and disappointment of the external history of the Church. Like Robert Browning, Matthew comes to the inner recesses of the Church's piety and devotion with the unerring instinct of an artist. There is a ground where poetry and art and music and mystical rapture are one, where the mind of the Christian truly enters the mind of Christ. Closer than most

of us, Matthew has approached this country; yet in our journey hither Matthew has helped us where the going was hard.

What I am trying to say of Matthew has been said much better in his own tribute to Nicolas Berdyaev, the great modern Russian thinker to whom Matthew acknowledges so large a debt. In Berdyaev's noble restatement of the Christian ethic, the highest stage is called 'the ethics of creativity.' Each human being, he asserts, is an idea of God, and man's supreme task is the realization of that idea, through the exercise of his God-given creative powers. It is on this higher level that man's personality reaches its fruition. Creation, begun by God, and continued by God through man, is still going on. "Man's part is in dedicating his gifts—whether they be in science, art, labor, government, economy, or in some humble skill—to the ends of the kingdom, rather than to either his own or purely secular purposes."

Hartford with its sons and daughters has indeed been blessed with the presence of Matthew and Zdenka Spinka. It would be superfluous to speak of our sorrow at their leaving us. May God richly bless them on their pilgrim's way. May many new books and paintings come from their hearts and minds and hands. May they continue to devote their gifts to the Kingdom of Christ.

## **In Memoriam:**

TERTIUS VAN DYKE, 1886-1958

Tertius Van Dyke, Dean-Emeritus of the Hartford Theological Seminary, died February 28, 1958 at the New Milford Hospital after a short illness.

He was born in New York City, January 18, 1886, the son of Henry and Ellen (Reid) Van Dyke. He was a Phi Beta Kappa student, graduating from Princeton University in 1908, receiving his Bachelor of Arts Degree. He also received a Bachelor's Degree from Magdalen College, Oxford University, in 1910 and his Master of Arts Degree from the same college in 1917. His theological training was at Union Theological Seminary, with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1913. He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church and served as Pastor at the Spring Street Presbyterian Church in New York City (1913-1916), and at the Park Avenue Presbyterian Church (1918-1926). During the year prior to the entry of the United States into World War I, he served as his father's secretary while Dr. Van Dyke was American Minister at the Hague.

He married Mary Elizabeth Cannon in 1924 and had three children.

In 1920, while pastor at the Park Avenue Church, he wrote "Songs of Seeking" and "Finding," and in 1926 collaborated with his father in "Light my Candle." In 1935 he published a biography of his father.

He transferred to the Congregational Church and moved to Washington, Conn., where he became pastor of the Congregational Church from 1926 until 1935 when he became Headmaster of The Gunnery School, in the same town. In 1942 he served as acting director of the student employment bureau at Princeton.

He took up his post as Dean and Professor of Practical Theology at the Hartford Theological Seminary in the fall of 1943, remaining there until his retirement in 1954. At this time he became Dean Emeritus, and interim minister of his old church at Washington.

He had been President of the Main Seacoast Mission since 1947 and during the past 40 years had spent the Christmas season on a boat distributing Christmas gifts among the people on the lonely islands of the upper Maine Coast.

Princeton University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1948. When he received it a small crippled boy snapped his picture and then turned to his neighbor and with deep emotion



in his voice said: "He was at our boy's camp last summer for a while, and we thought he was wonderful!"

He was treasurer of The Children's Museum of Hartford (1946-1950), and was its President from 1950-1955.

He was a life member of the American Museum of Natural History and the National Audubon Society; director of the American Waldensian Aid Society since 1922; member of the Sons of Revolution, Princeton Club, and Century Association of New York City; trustee of Hillyer College in 1954 and a trustee of the Hartford Seminary Foundation from 1928-1957.

After his retirement he made his home in Washington, Conn.

He leaves his wife, two sons, Henry and Paul, and a daughter, Mrs. Frederick Maccabee, Jr., of Charlottesville, Virginia.

A memorial service was held in the First Congregational Church, Washington, on March 9, 1958.

*Elizabeth de W. Root*

